March comes in like a lion

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3月のライオン

Chapter 18

Distant Thunder (PART 2)

IT'S LIKE TAKING AN OLD DOG FOR A WALK WITH A TIGHT LEASH AROUND ITS NECK.

...ISN'T IT DEPRESSING?

SFX: TOTON (CLACLACK)

SFX: TATAN (CLACLACK)

...YOU KNOW.

BECAUSE YOU'RE SO KIND.

SFX: TOTON (CLACLACK)

SFX: TOTON TOTON (CLICLACK CLICLACK)

SFX: TATAN (CLACLACK)

I'M A LITTLE WORRIED.

I WONDER... WOULD YOU END UP PURPOSELY LOSING TO HIM AT A TIME LIKE THIS?

Matsunaga Shouichi, 7th Dan. Age 65. Originally from Fukushima Prefecture. Became a professional shogi player at 25.

Forty years of experience as a shogi player.

At the height of his career, he was in the B1 group for one term.

—I've seen him many times in the shogi hall.

He has a short stature and a brisk walk.

I just wanted to hear how "Forty years..." sounded like, but it's almost impossible to imagine.

Someone more than twice my age who has lived and died repeatedly on this 81-square board...

THIS SCENERY...

FOR FORTY YEARS...

Forty years... an overwhelming length of time...

What could he be feeling right now?

—I can't even imagine...

IF MATSUNAGA-SAN FELL EVEN FROM C2, HE'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO RETIRE.

AH.

.....

MATSU-NAGA-SAN...

SFX: PAAN PAAN (CLAP CLAP)

THESE ARE HIS FEELINGS?!

I really couldn't have imagined it.

Eeh

...That is all.

God, I really just... I just want to give up and go home.

Ah,

but please still bless me with victory.

SFX: HAAAAA (SIGH)

NOTHING ELSE I CAN DO...

はあああああ

SFX: BA-N (SHO-CK)

SFX: BA (CLACK)

He seems even more depressed!?

Speaking of which, he shouldn't have been drawing his luck in the first place... at a time like this...

What on earth did it say on there...?!

–Plus, he's shaking crazy hard.

Then he went to draw his fortune!?

SFX: CHARIN CHARIN (CLINK CLINK)

SFX: DOKI DOKI (BA-DUMP BA-DUMP)

S-surely he didn't actually go home...

Matsu-naga-san hasn't arrived yet...!?

...Um...

SFX: SUSASASASA (SKITTER SKITTER)

I'll get there quickly, calm myself down, and wait for the match!!

Feels like he saw something he shouldn't have.

I... I'm leaving!!

SFX: DONYORI (GLOOMY)

SIGN: SHOGI HALL

He... stopped?

.....

Huh?

.....

SFX: PITA (STEP)

SFX: SU.... (SH....)

He came!

What a relief.

He's not... moving?

He...

He moved...

Psycho-logical warfare? Is this some type of battle tactic of the veteran players...?

SFX: KIRIRI (SHARP)

Forty years...

How will I be in forty years...?

IF YOU PLEASE.

Now...

what will he play?

IT'S TIME. LET US BEGIN THE MATCH.

SFX: PASHI (CLACK)

SFX: PASHI (CLACK)

SFX: PISHI (CLACK)

–Well then, I'll start breaking up that formation with P-1e...

Stubbornly surrounding himself, does he mean to start a long and steady battle?

S-5c, Anaguma Castle defence?

P-7d...

A sudden attack... Wasn't he using Anaguma Castle defence?

I can't figure out his battle technique...

—Then, I'll respond with K-4h.

SFX: PACHI (CLICK)

SFX: PACHI (CLACK)

L-1b!?

Eh? What!? It's still the Anaguma Castle tactic after all!?

Heave-ho!

Work Resumes☆

I can't read him at all...

What the hell is this!?

He's not... moving randomly, right?

Probably... wants... to confuse me...?

He definitely has something up his sleeve, right?

Boah?

Eh? There was a weird sound just now?

SFX: DARA DARA... (DRIP DRIP...)

SFX: PASHI (CLACK)

Alright, he went in. Then, let's go!!

P-7e.

SFX: DOOO

SFX: KYA

Hey!! Don't go there!!

EHHH?

Matsunaga 7th-dan.. K-2b.

SFX: PASHI (CLACK)

Okay, onto N-7g...

If he moves now, Kuma-san will be in danger!!

Did he just come out!?

SFX: DADADADADA (SKITTISH SCITTER)

How... difficult...

Why is this...

so difficult...

SFX: TSUMI (SLIDE)

AUGH.

Indeed...

Eh?

OH NO

THAT

WHITE'S

SFX: BAKI BAKI (SHIVER SHIVER)

5e... but that's a bit strange.

then N-3f... well, even if it gets dangerous...

--In that case, I'd still be in the lead...?

In Matsunaga's Possession: Rook, Knight, Pawn

In Kiriyama's Possession: 4 Pawns

But... if he moves the Bishop...

SFX: BOSO BOSO BOSO (TRMBL TRMBL TRMBL)

Speaking of which

his acting is really bad!?

What's this... side glance!? Eh!? What!? is he trying to strum me along!?

If I move the rook

Damn

SFX: CHIRA (SIDE GLANCE)

I'M A LITTLE WORRIED

YOU KNOW

BECAUSE YOU'RE SO KIND

Oh... god. I-I-Let's finish this. Let's do it.

This is the first time I've felt this way!

It would be pretty hard to lose on purpose even if I wanted to.

So... so difficult. Somehow this is immensely difficult!?

Overflowing Overflowing

Player: Kiriyama Lv17

Values life

Charges bravely Forward

将棋会館

Sorry! Even if you say that I'm of the impatient generation that doesn't know hardship, I'm really sorry!

In reality, it would be appear that I'm not kind at all.

I'm really sorry. Even if you say that, this is a different matter.

SFX: GIRI GIRI GIRI (GRUDGING)

W... What a terrible attitude!

What? What was that? What about the dignity of 40 years as a shogi player? Nevermind that, as a *human* being, what the hell was that!?

Waaah~ At least try to make me respect you!

Is it really okay like this!?

SFX: BARA BARA (SCATTER SCATTER)

...

I...

I... lost...

* Don't ever do this.

SFX: GIRI GIRI (GRR GRR)

.....

I...

—15 minutes later...

SFX: BIKUU (SHOCK)

!!

Whoaa~

Seems to have thought of the same thing.

I don't want to "wait for the elevator" or be "together" with him.

SFX: PYUUUU (DASH)

Forget it! Hurry up! I'll scoot and head back.

SFX: ASE ASE (PANIC PANIC)

SFX: TSURUNKO (SLIP)

SFX: BBBEEN (TUMBLE)

.....

Matsunaga-san—!

Kyaa

SFX: BAAASHI (THUMP)

SFX: FUBAAA (GROAN)

I just fell, that's all! Why do I need to go see a doctor!?

I HATE DOCTORS!!

D-doctor!?

LET'S GO SEE A DOCTOR AFTER ALL!!

I'll go with you, so...

So annoying! Stop whining!!

But, didn't you just say that you nearly died!?

That's why I say that youngsters nowadays are more and more impudent!!

I nearly died!

Am I okay?!

UM... ARE YOU OKAY?

SFX: GUBUUU (B-BROW.)

Enough. Go away! Hurry up!

I don't want to see your fa...

SFX: KUWI (CANCRY GAZE)

.....

.....

.....

Treat me...

SFX: FURU FURU FURU (TREMBLE TREMBLE TREMBLE)

TREAT ME!!

I want to eat soba!! Actually, *unagi*!!!

Eeeeh!?

Didn't you just tell me to go away!?

Really, which is it!?

THE BEST QUALITY THERE IS!!

You're rich, right!? Damn you!

将棋会館

Chapter 18 end

NOTES from the translators

Page 129

Anaguma (bear in the hole) Castle defence involves moving your King to the corner of the board and surrounding it with two gold generals and one silver.

Page 131-132

Mino Castle defence is a strategy which involves having the gold and silver generals protect each other while protecting the King. In the Anaguma Castle defence, the generals work separately.

Kuma / Kuma-san means "bear", a play on the Anaguma Castle defence and refers to Matsunaga's King.

Page 137

Unagi is Japanese eel, commonly grilled with a sweet sauce and served with rice.